

**Minutes of the Arlington Committee on Tourism and Economic Development (ATED) -
June 22, 2016**

Bowes Real Estate, 1010 Massachusetts Avenue, Arlington, MA

Present: Angela Olszewski (Chair), William Lyons, Robert Bowes, Joseph A. Curro, Jr., Theodore Peluso, Thomas Davison

Guests: Jared Glanz-Berger, Alberto Guzman, April Ranck

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m.

Mr. Peluso moved to approve the minutes with one minor clerical correction. Seconded by Mr. Lyons and passed unanimously with two abstentions (T. Davison, R. Bowes).

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Treasurer's Report

Mr. Davison reported that income continues to be received for the Block Party, with approximated \$6,300 raised to date. Some reimbursements are outstanding. Mr. Davison talked to Comptroller Richard Viscay, who wants to understand that Mr. Davison has the authority to submit requests.

Mr. Curro moved to authorize Mr. Davison to submit expenses. Seconded by Mr. Bowes and passed unanimously. Mr. Davison indicated that he would write a note to the Comptroller reporting on the vote and that he would copy Ms. Olszewski on this communication. He indicated that everything that is outstanding should be paid in the coming week, due to the imminent end of the fiscal year.

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Block Party

Mr. Davison indicated that preparations were going really well. He stated that Marga Varea, the contract producer, had done an outstanding job, lining up 40 booths: 1/2 artists and 1/2 merchants. She also worked on the web site and social media.

The Center Merchants group (Leland Stein, Carla Dorato, Mike Buglio) have been active.

Mr. Davison predicted a good day, and reported on set-up preparations. He reported that he had met with Veterans Services Director Jeff Chunglo regarding space near the Center veterans

memorial. He stated that the Department of Public Works and the Town Manager had been great to work with. He was in direct contact with Officer Corey Rateau and the duty officer.

Food vendors were planned to be spread out and to include: Menotomy Grill and Tavern, Chilly Cow, Thana Thai, Common Ground, La Victoria, and Andrina's.

For kids, the following were planned: masked performance, a puppet group, Playtime crafts area, Costume Company dress-up, Legos, and Bubbles.

The largest remaining issue was volunteers. Some staffing remained needed for the ATED tent.

Mr. Peluso reported that Marga was at the tent for Feast of East and that equipment such as the tent and tables were in the Visitor Center.

Mr. Davison said that setup would be on Saturday morning at 9:30. He indicated that banners were at the Visitor Center. He reiterated that coverage for the ATED booth itself is a problem.

Mr. Davison said that the Chamber of Commerce was unable to cooperate this year, as they just rolled out their welcome basket initiative, which is consuming a lot of time and energy. He said that the Arlington Center for the Arts would be at the festival with a booth.

Mr. Peluso voiced a concern that a lot of the work for the Block Party seemed to be flowing back to ATED. Mr. Davison said that Ms. Varea had been spending 20-30 hours per week. He expressed concern that arts groups haven't been able to coordinate with this as far as volunteers.

Mr. Davison reminded all that the hours of the Block Party would be 11 p.m. to 5 p.m. and that there would be a big line-up of music plus switchover acts.

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Feast of the East

Mr. Peluso reported on a good showing and a great time. A number of volunteers from Friends of the Council on Aging and others helped out.

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Mr. Bowes discussed the welcome bags being distributed to new Arlington residents.

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Mr. Davison asked about June and festivals in Arlington. He wondered if we should reach out to

the Greek festival next year to explore the possibility of joint publicity.

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There was general discussion regarding the state of Arlington's retail areas and vacancies. The consensus was to invite Economic Development Planner Ted Fields to ATED's September meeting.

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Visitor Center

It was reported that Barbara Goodman has officially been hired as volunteer coordinator and wants to start working. Mr. Davison offered to contact Ms. Goodman regarding working the Block Party.

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Web Site

Mr. Peluso reported that Alan Jones has started working on a private tourism web site, which he will completely own. Mr. Peluso stated his intention of offering the Cultural District a web site under this umbrella.

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Arlington International Film Festival (AIFF)

Ms. Ranck expressed appreciation that ATED had the confidence to try to bring the Festival back to Arlington. She said that last year, AIFF opened a new conversation with Capitol Theatre owner.

Mr. Curro moved that ATED sponsor AIFF for 2016. Seconded by Mr. Davison and unanimously adopted.

The Festival will be 10/27-10/30 at the Capitol Theatre. AIFF is bringing Wapikoni representatives to Arlington. There will be one screen at the Capitol, with plans for 250 on the first night and 190 people after that.

Mr. Curro advised consulting with the Board of Selectmen's office regarding the scheduling of banners. Arlington has received recognition from different parts of country for jurors, etc. Last year, 24 countries submitted films.

There is a lot more interest from businesses from throughout the Greater Boston area. AARP and RCN continue to sponsor AIFF.

The Festival has once again started a film series at Robbins Library.

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There was no update on recognition for late ATED member Roland Chaput. Mr. Peluso moved to request that the Board of Selectmen consider naming the Visitor Center after Roland Chaput. Seconded by Mr. Bowes and unanimously adopted.

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Old Business

There was discussion of the need to bring back the document on ATED purpose and organization that members had been working on months ago by the time of the September meeting. Mr. Curro offered to send out the latest draft.

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New Business

Mr. Peluso reported on how many people read TripAdvisor reviews.

Mr. Davison had a question about the Arlington Center Safe Travel Project and dumpsters.

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Mr. Peluso moved to adjourn at 8:35 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Bowes and unanimously adopted.

Respectfully submitted, Joseph A. Curro, Jr.